

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-11. (Cancelled)

12. (Original) A radiation image information reading apparatus for two-dimensionally reading information representing at least characters and an image carried by a stimuable phosphor sheet which is being fed by a feed system, comprising:

a reading unit for reading the information from said stimuable phosphor sheet;

a feed system for feeding the stimuable phosphor sheet to said reading unit;

a cleaning mechanism disposed in said feed system upstream of said reading unit;

said cleaning mechanism comprising:

a housing surrounding a portion of said feed system; and

an air suction unit for pressurizing an interior space of said housing with respect to an external atmosphere, for preventing dust particles from being attached to surfaces of said stimuable phosphor sheet.

13. (Original) A radiation image information reading apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said housing has an air inlet for introducing air into said housing and an air outlet for drawing and discharging air introduced from said air inlet, whereby dust particles on the

stimulable phosphor sheet in said housing can be guided by air introduced from said air inlet toward said air outlet and then discharged from said housing from said air outlet.

14. (Original) A radiation image information reading apparatus for two-dimensionally reading information representing at least characters and an image carried by a stimulable phosphor sheet which is being fed by a feed system, comprising:

a reading unit for reading the information from said stimulable phosphor sheet;

a feed system for feeding the stimulable phosphor sheet to said reading unit;

a cleaning mechanism disposed in said feed system upstream of said reading unit;

said cleaning mechanism comprising:

a housing surrounding a portion of said feed system; and

a brush roller assembly disposed in said housing in contact with a surface of the stimulable phosphor sheet which is being fed by the feed system.

15. (Original) A radiation image information reading apparatus according to claim 14, further comprising:

dust removing means disposed in said housing and held in contact with at least a tip end of said brush roller assembly, for removing dust particles from the tip end of said brush roller assembly.

16. (Original) A radiation image information reading apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said brush roller assembly comprising:

upstream and downstream brush roller pairs disposed in a spaced interval in the direction in which said stimuable phosphor sheet is fed;

said cleaning mechanism further comprising:

drive means for rotating said upstream brush roller pair in a direction which is the same as said direction in which said stimuable phosphor sheet is fed, and rotating said downstream brush roller pair in a direction which is opposite to said direction in which said stimuable phosphor sheet is fed.

17. (Original) A radiation image information reading apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said drive means comprises:

a single drive source for rotating said upstream and downstream brush roller pairs.

18. (Original) A radiation image information reading apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said drive means comprises:

a drive source for rotating said upstream brush roller pair at a speed higher than the speed at which said stimuable phosphor sheet is fed.

19. (Original) A radiation image information reading apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said cleaning mechanism further comprises:

a flow path for circulating air through said housing.